

## Message Text

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41

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 RSR-01 /080 W  
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O R 101326 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3693

INFOIPUQVGM/ AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5409

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 4127

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PFOR, IN, SK

SUBJ: SIKIM

REF : A) BOMBAY 747; B) CALCUTTA 644

SUMMARY: SIKKIM APPEARS TO BE QUIETING DOWN FOLLOWING TAKE-OVER OF ADMINISTRATION BY GOI AND APPOINTMENT OF INDIAN OFFICIAL AS CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR. MEA TELLS US THAT IT HAS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY CHINESE REACTION TO SIKKIM DEVELOPMENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. REPORTS IN DELHI PAPERS FROM GANGTOK SAY THAT THE LEADERS OF THE " JOINT ACTION COUNCIL" WHO SPEARHEADED THE UNREST HAVE ASKED THEIR VOLUNTEERS TO INSURE A SWIFT RETURN TO NORMALCY. THE JOINT ACTION COUNCIL, SET UP BY POLITICIANS OF THE TWO NEPALI DOMINATED SIKKIM CONGRESS PARTIES, HAVE BEEN PRESSING FOR POLITICAL REFORMS AND INDIAN INTERVENTION. ITS LEADERS REPORTEDLY CONTINUE TO DEMAND CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES IN SIKKIM, INCLUDING DISMANTLING OF CHOGYAL RULE.

2. MEA JOINT SECRETARY FOR EAST ASIA PARANJPE TOLD THE POLITICAL  
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COUNSELOR THAT SO FAR AS THE INDIANS KNOW THERE HAS BEEN NO REACTION BY THE CHINESE TO DEVELOPMENTS IN SIKKIM. PARANJPE

THOUGHT THAT IN FACT IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT THE CHINESE WOULD STIR UP A FUSS OVER SIKKIM AT A TIME WHEN THEY APPEAR TO BE INTERESTED IN NOVING GRADUALLY TOWARD BETTER RELATIONS WITH INDIA.

3. MEA SECRETARY ( WEST) AVTAR SINGH, WHOM THE GOI SENT TO SIKKIM ON APRIL 4 TO ASSESS THE SITUATION, HAS RETURNED TO DELHI. WE WILL SEE HIM LATER THIS WEEK. ACCORDING TO THE INDIAN WIRE SERVICE, AVTAR SINGH TOLD THE PRESS IN CALCUTTA ON THE WAY BACK TO DELHI THAT THE CHOGYAL WOULD REMAIN THE " CONSTITUTIONAL HEAD" OF SIKKIM AND THAT THE GOI ADMINISTRATION WOULD " EXAMINE THE DIFFERENCES OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES THERE AND WOULD TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTIONS IN DUE COURSE."

4. THE GOI HAS SENT B. S. DAS, COMMISSIONER OF THE DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION AND FORMER INDIAN REPRESENTATIVE IN BHUTAN, TO TAKE OVER AS CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR, REVIVING INDIA' S EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY IN SIKKIM.

5. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SURENDRA PAL SINGH MADE A STATEMENT ( SEPTEL) TO THE LOK SABHA ON APRIL 9 EXPLAINING THE GOI' S ACTION IN TERMS OF POLARIZATION BETWEEN " MAHARAJA" AND " POPULARLY ELECTED POLITICAL LEADERS AND THE MASSES." HE SAID THAT THE GOI HAD TAKEN OVER THE ADMINISTRATION AT THE CHOGYAL' S REQUEST AND " AT THE DEMAND OF THE PEOPLE OF SIKKIM." POPULAR AND ELECTED LEADERS, HE ADDED, HAVE WELCOMED GOI ACCEPTANCE OF THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAINTAINING LAW AND ORDER AND RUNNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF SIKKIM.

6. COMMENT: WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE HERE THAT GOI STIRRED UP CURRENT TROUBLE IN SIKKIM. BASIC ELEMENTS FOR DISCONTENT WERE ALREADY THERE UNDER SYSTEM WHICH TRIED TO BALANCE INDIGENOUS MINORITY AND SEVENTY- FIVE PERCENT NEPALI POPULATION. NEPALI GRIEVANCES AND MUTUAL SUSPICIONS OF INDIANS AND CHOGYAL CIRCLE HAVE LONG HISTORY. AT SAME TIME, GOI OFFICIALS HAVE HAD CLOSE CONTACTS WITH NEPALI POLITICIANS OVER THE YEARS. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER' S STATEMENT

AND DELHI PRESS PLAY CERTAINLY INDICATE SATISFACTION WITH OUTCOME OF RECENT AGITATION.

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7. WHAT WILL HAPPEN NOW, I ASSUME, IS THAT THE GOI WILL RUN

SIKKIM AS IT DID BEFORE WHEN AN INDIAN ADMINISTRATOR WAS IN CHARGE. THE LAST ADMINISTRATOR, I. S. CHOPRA, LEFT SIKKIM IN MAY 1972 AND, AT THE CHOGYAL'S INSISTENCE, WAS NOT REPLACED. THE INDIANS ARE UNLIKELY, PARTICULARLY IN THE SHORT TERM, TO LET THE CHOGYAL TAKE BACK EVEN THE LIMITED DEGREE OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY THAT HE HAS ENJOYED IN THE PAST. FOR THE INDIANS, THE LONGER TERM PROBLEM WILL BE TO WORK OUT A REPRESENTATIONAL SYSTEM THAT WILL SATISFY THE 75 PERCENT NEPALI MAJORITY, PROTECT RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS MINORITY, AND PRESERVE CHOGYAL AS TITULAR CHIEF OF STATE. INDIAN TROOPS ALREADY STATIONED IN SIKKIM. INDIA CONTROLS SIKKIM'S DEFENSE, EXTERNAL POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS UNDER THE 1950 TREATY WITH SIKKIM. INDIANS WILL PROBABLY PREFER TO PRESERVE THE EXISTING TREATY RELATIONSHIP RATHER THAN GO FORWARD TO FULL INCORPORATION OF SIKKIM INTO INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK. PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS PROVIDE INDIA WITH AMPLE DEFENSE AND ADMINISTRATIVE FLEXIBILITY IN SENSITIVE BORDER AREA AND AVOID ADDING NEW TROUBLED TRIBAL/ LINGUISTIC ELEMENT TO INDIAN POLITICAL BODY. MOYNIHAN

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
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**Reference:** 73 BOMBAY 747, 73 CALCUTTA 644  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** boyleja  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 24 AUG 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <24-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <27-Aug-2001 by boyleja>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
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**To:** BOMBAY  
CALCUTTA  
HONG KONG  
ISLAMABAD  
KATHMANDU  
MADRAS  
NEA

SECSTATE WASHDC

**Type:** TE

**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005